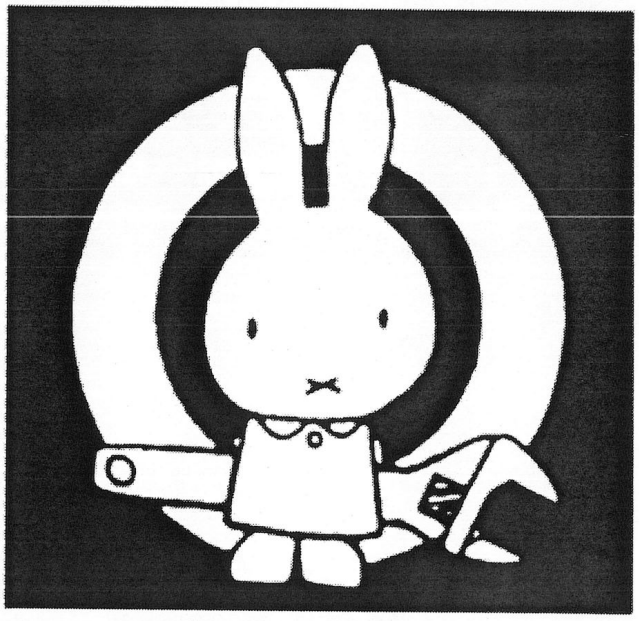
ACTIVATE

Issue 5

www.apolitical.info/activate

WE FIGHT

LIKE GIRLS



CONTACT US:

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we answer every letter and every question we get.

Police arrested a twelve year old boy. He was handcuffed and taken to jail. They charged him with 'disruption of an educational institution'. He was left alone in a cell for two hours. His crime was "purposely stomping in the water".

(Source: www.schnews.org.uk)

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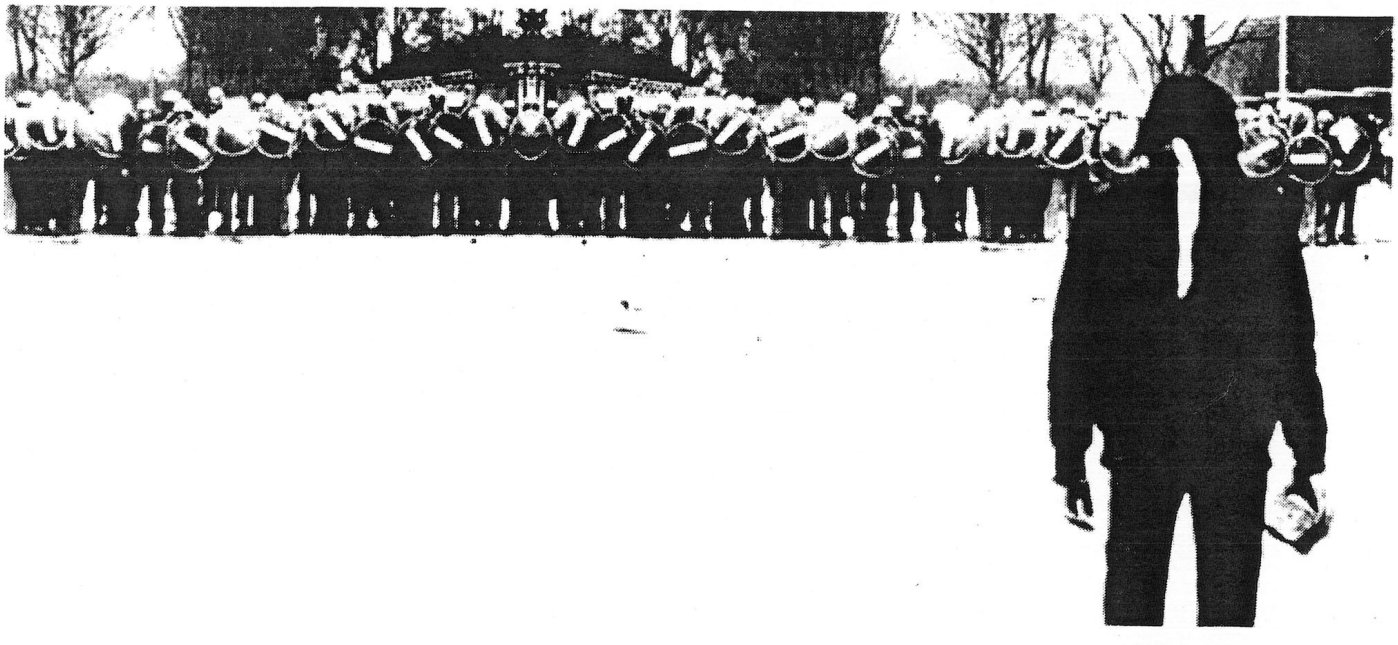
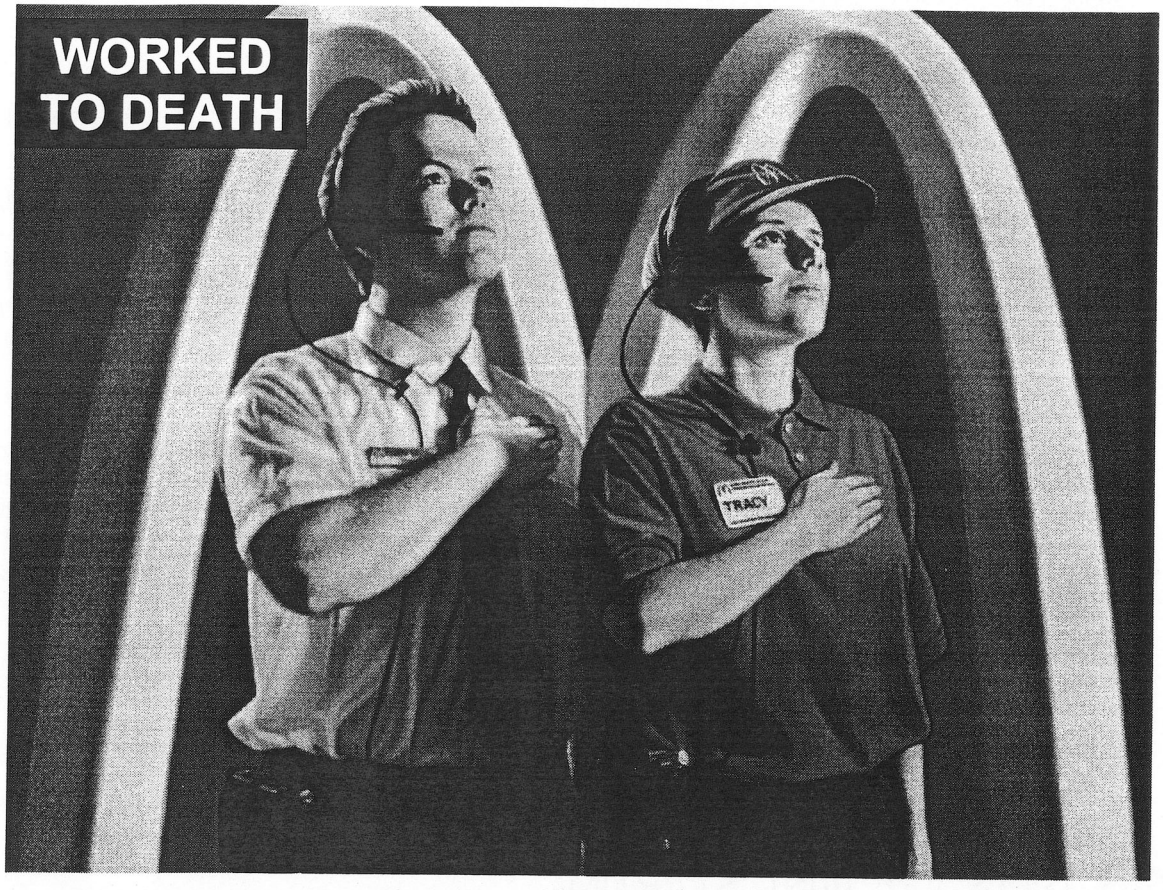




More than 1,600 young workers are seriously injured or maimed each year in Australia.

Sweatshops

About 70,000 Australian children work in the clothing industry as outworkers - people who sew clothes at home. Some are as young as 8. The children can get skeletal malformations, asthma, or byssinosis (a lung disease which can kill you, caused by breathing in cotton fibres). Outworkers are usually Asian migrant families. They can get as little as $2 an hour. They can't get any other work, because there's nowhere they can learn English. The families have to make their kids work because their bosses set impossible deadlines. One girl said she started working at age 7. She worked each day after school from 3pm to 10pm. On weekends she worked from 8 in the morning. Sometimes she was still at her machine at 2am. She had to take days off school to work. Sometimes she wasn't allowed to go to bed at all. The bosses blackmail the families by refusing to pay them for one job until they agree to do the next one. A family could earn less than $20 for a dress which sells for $240. Child labour is so common that one shop in Cabramatta (in western Sydney) offered a service of measuring and fitting children for industrial sewing machines.

Supermarkets and Fast Food

About 135,000 15 and 16 year olds have casual jobs in retail. These are mostly in supermarkets and fast food. There are high injury rates in both, including serious burns and losing fingers. Fast food chains like McDonalds are well known for paying their workers very low rates as well - as little as $3 an hour.

What's the government doing?

There was an enquiry into child labour laws in New South Wales, which said that they should be drastically changed. The Federal Government said Australia has "no child labour problems". They're against having legal minimum wages for children. They also don't want to ban child labour.

Why?

Obviously the government could bring in laws to protect children if they wanted. If they wanted, they could stop McDonalds and Hungry Jacks paying kids $3 an hour, bullying them, and then firing them when they get too old. They could stop the clothing industry using children (and adults) as slaves if they wanted. This goes for the Labor Party and the Liberal Party. This has happened when both of them are in power. It will keep happening with either of them in power. The fact is that they don't do anything, because they don't want to do anything. They don't care about ordinary people. Child labour is good for rich people, because they can pay out less in

wages and make more money. And the government works in the interests of rich people only. If a few kids get their hands cut off or die from lung disease…well, it's not their kids.

Until we get together and overthrow this system, children are going to be exploited to make the rich richer. Under anarchism no one will be exploited. Everyone will be able to work or get an education or both as they want. And everyone will share in the benefits, not just the owners of companies. No one will be forced to work by poverty, or be unemployed, and no one will be forced to drop out of school, or be forced to stay either. Are you on our side?

Earning Their Pocket Money

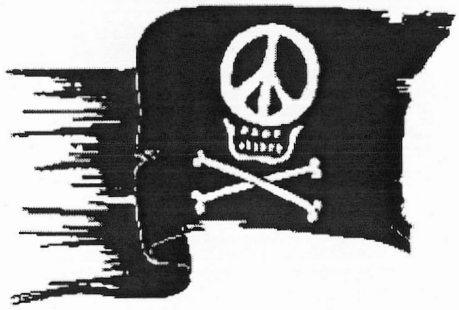
There is mistreatment of child actors as young as 18 months old, for example

- 18 month old twins having to work 12 and a half hours at a stretch.
- A 13 year old and a 15 year old working on a TV series being left on their own each night and having to do their own cooking and shopping.
- An 11 year old making a film in Alice Springs having to spend 12 hours a day on location.
- Allegations of ice being used on babies' feet to make them cry at the right time.

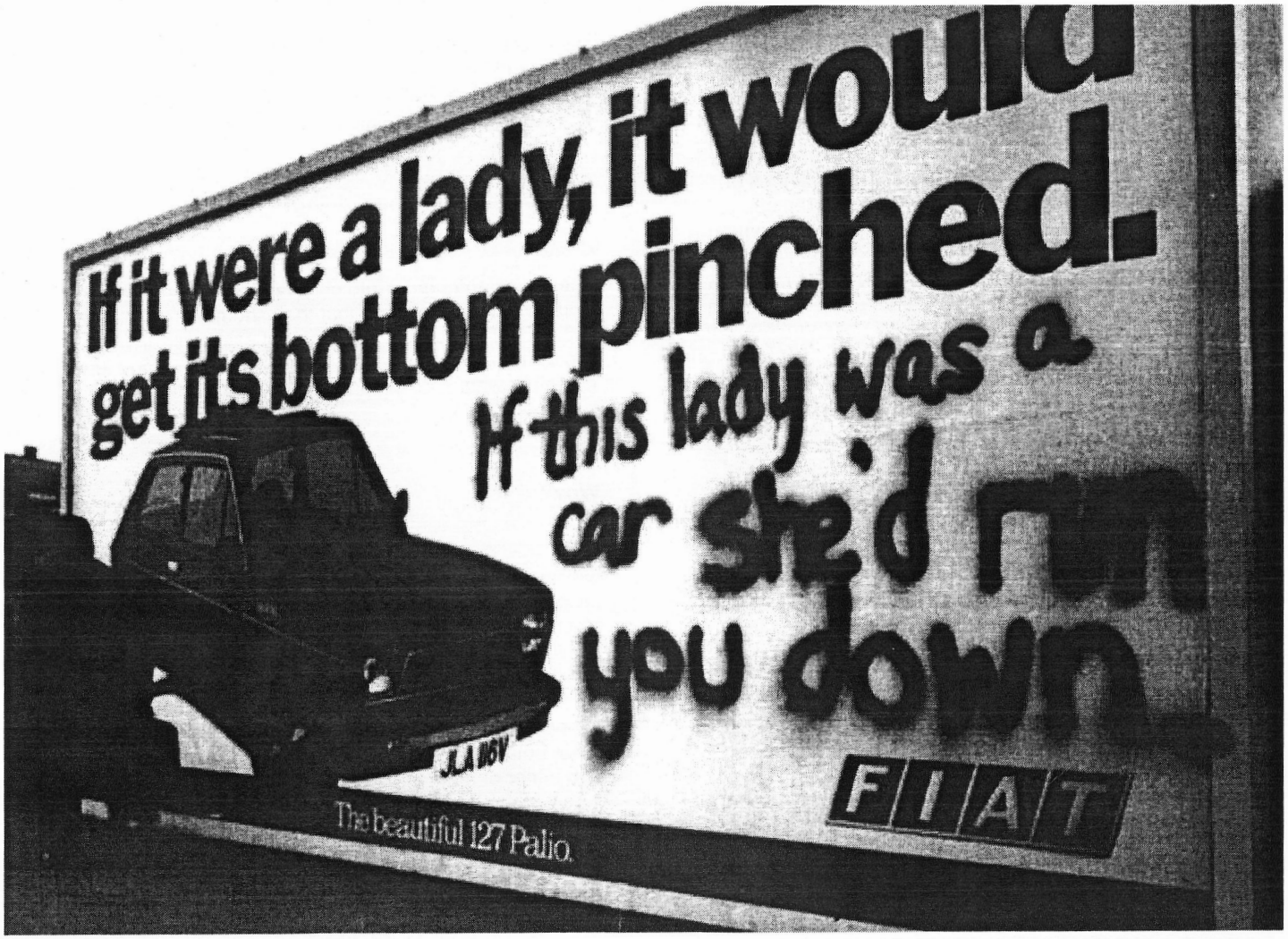
Victims

age 16: lost 4 fingers to a mincer in a butcher's shop.
age 15: labourer whose arm was crushed on site.
age 13: killed by machinery while spraying crops.
age 10: killed while working on a motorbike on a farm.

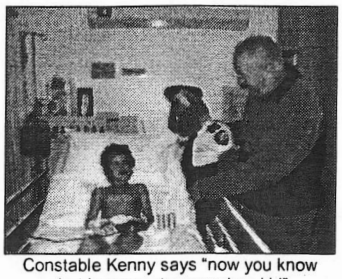
THEIR DAYS ARE NUMBERED



OUR DAYS ARE JUST STARTING



Are YOU A Policeman?



Constable Kenny says "now you know what happens to squealers kid".

1 One night you spot someone in a cloth cap and a stripy jumper shinning down a drainpipe with a sackful of candelabras. How many times would you say 'Hello' to him?

a) Once
b) Twice
c) Three times

2 You arrive at the scene of a hit-and-run accident. The victim is a young black lad who has been knocked off his bike and is unconscious. What is the first thing you do?

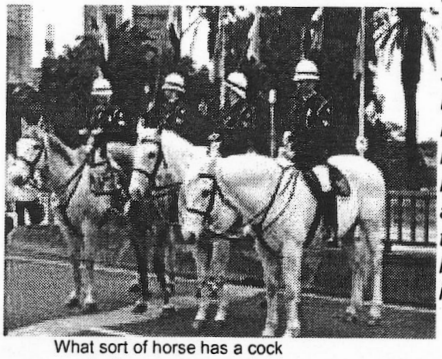
a) Check for vital life signs and put him in the recovery position.
b) Ask if anyone took the registration number of the vehicle involved.
c) Slap him till he comes round, ask where he stole the bike from and throw him into the back of a police van.

3 You are trying to teach your pet dog to sit and stay on command, but after a few hours he is getting bored and losing concentration. What do you do?

a) Give up and take him for a walk.
b) Speak to him in a loud voice to show him who's boss.
c) Hang him by his collar over a fence and kick him to death.

4 Early one morning, you find yourself first at the scene of a break-in at a newsagents shop. The owner has yet to arrive. What do you do?

a) Call the police and guard the shop to prevent further looting.
b) Hurry past, it's nothing to do with you.
c) Go inside and stuff your uniform with cigarettes, and sell them later to work colleagues from your locker.



What sort of horse has a cock halfway up its back?

5 Your young son comes home from school and reports that he has done badly in a spelling test. What action would you take?

a) Laugh it off, telling him Shakespeare was unable to spell.
b) Sit down and calmly discuss the problem.
c) Take him down the cellar, wrap him in a mattress, and beat him with a length of rubber hose.

6 At work, your boss discovers that you have been systematically incompetent and dishonest. You are looking at certain firing and a possible jail sentence. What do you do?

a) Resign in disgrace and accept your punishment.
b) Deny all charges and try to ride the storm.
c) Accept early retirement on the grounds of 'ill health' with a fucking big lump sum and a full pension.

7 In the bathroom one morning, you notice that the toothpaste tube has been squeezed from the middle, and the top left off. Would you

a) Replace the cap and say no more about it.
b) Make a joke of it over breakfast, hoping the culprit will get the message.
c) Lock each member of the family in a separate room and keep them awake for five days. Disorient them with violent 'Good Cop Bad Cop' mood swings and make each one believe that the others have made signed statements blaming them. When their spirit is broken, hand them a short and harmless statement to sign, the last two pages of which are blank, where you then type an invented confession.

8 Driving home from the pub, you are pulled over by a police car and breathalysed. The roadside test proves positive. What do you do?

a) Admit the offence and vow to change your ways.
b) Contest the result and demand a blood test at the station.
c) Flash your warrant card and continue on your merry way.

9 What do you consider the most important skill you could bring to a job?

a) An ability to organise and work as a member of a team.
b) Being able to solve problems quickly and imaginatively.
c) Being over 5 foot 10.

HOW DID YOU DO?

MOSTLY A's: You are fair, honest, and always try to do the right thing. Sorry.
MOSTLY B's: You are not definitely a cop, but on the other hand you are not definitely not a cop either. You are somewhere in between. Maybe you're a ticket inspector or a security guard.
MOSTLY C's: Congratulations! You're the fuzz. Tirelessly pounding your beat, you impartially dish out justice to young and old, black and white, paying particular attention to the young and black.

Getting Over Breakups

- You may feel really low right now. But if you can force yourself at first to take these steps, it'll get easier!
- Give your friends a call and set up a time to do something fun.
- Do the things you used to enjoy but weren't able to do when you were dating your ex.
- Do the stuff you've been thinking about getting involved in, but haven't had time for.
- Let yourself be around your ex.

If you're comfortable being around your ex and don't feel the need to go back to your old relationship, congratulations! You've moved on with your life!

Tips:

- When a person is in a serious relationship, sometimes they put less effort into friendships. This means you're going to have to be the one to take the first step in rebuilding your friendships.
- Sometimes a person can identify themselves by the relationship (example: seeing yourself as 'Ashley's boyfriend'). This can be hard to deal with when the relationship is over and you're left without an identity.
- Getting over someone is tough, but you'll learn a lot about yourself and the kind of relationship you want for the future.

Dealing With Stress

Go for a walk or run - Exercising can be a good way of relieving stress. It helps to get rid of all that pent up energy and can leave you feeling much calmer. Any sort of exercise can be good. You may want to go and kick a footy with friends or head to the gym.

Hang out with friends - If you're feeling stressed it might help to take your mind off things for a while. Hanging out with friends is one way of doing that. Talking about your problems with them might help. You might find that the same things stress them out.

Taking some deep breaths - Deep breathing can help to relax the body and calm you down. Taking deep breaths before an exam, game, job interview or before going on stage may help to calm you down and focus.

Try to avoid smoking, alcohol and caffeine - It may be tempting to use smoking and alcohol to manage your stress. Try to avoid using these things as a way of coping. In the long run they will make you more stressed out.

Speaking to someone - If you find that you're always stressed and it's hard to carry on with day to day stuff it may be helpful to someone about it. Parents, teachers, school counsellors or youth workers might be able to help you.

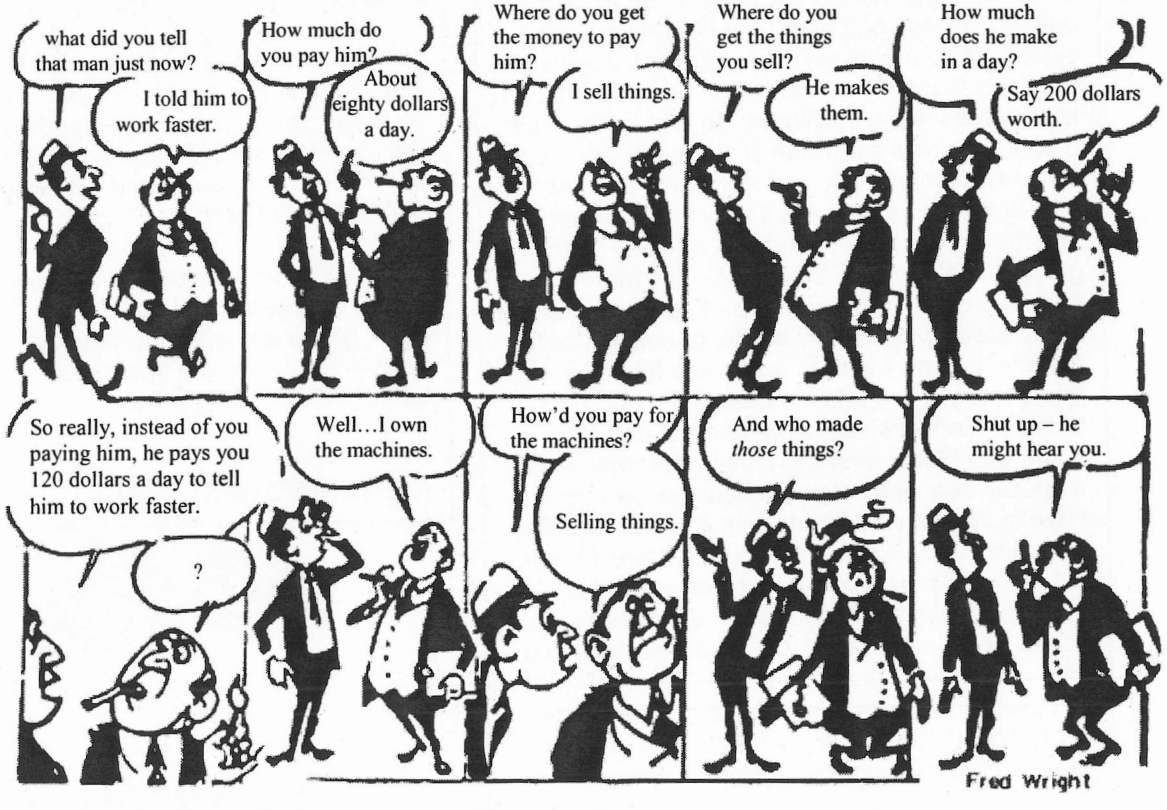
HO! HO! HO!

"We were loading train cars with Christmas ornaments and there was this artificial snow stuff that was everywhere and it started caking in my lungs. I went to the supposed first-aid office to complain and it was locked with nobody there, as usual. I asked for a day off to go to the general hospital and they said no. 'We've got to get these boxes out so people can celebrate Christmas; you wouldn't want to ruin their Christmas!'

"I quickly got disillusioned with the place and started destroying all the Christmas ornaments I could get my hands on. I threw cases and cases of them against the brick walls. I just couldn't stop myself once I heard the sound of those delicate ornaments smashing into thousands of red pieces, green pieces, and pieces with snowflakes on them. When I reached my self-imposed quota, I packed the worthless ornaments up and sent them out to hundreds of soon-to-be-irate customers. Since I was the last person to load them onto the train, no one would find out till it got to its destination -- and I knew I'd be long gone."

This story shows some ways that companies try to trick their workers. Firstly, making the problem 'your fault'. The company doesn't have a safe workplace. They don't plan for people needing time off. This was their choice. But, instead of taking responsibility for it, they make it the fault of the worker. There's no time to go to the hospital. So you have to work in an unsafe place, and not go to the hospital.

The other common thing that happened here, is a company hiding its own selfishness and making out that the worker is selfish. Like all companies, the aim of the company in this story was to make money. But they weren't honest about it. They didn't say "people won't buy Christmas ornaments after Christmas. If you don't do the work now, the company will lose money. We're here to make money. So you can't go to the hospital". They pretended that the company was un-selfish and the worker was selfish. "We want to help people celebrate Christmas. If you don't do this work, you're ruining Christmas".


what did you tell that man just now?
I told him to work faster.
How much do you pay him?
About eighty dollars a day.
Where do you get the money to pay him?
I sell things.
Where do you get the things you sell?
He makes them.
How much does he make in a day?
Say 200 dollars worth.
So really, instead of you paying him, he pays you 120 dollars a day to tell him to work faster.
?
Well...I own the machines.
How'd you pay for the machines?
Selling things.
And who made *those* things?
Shut up – he might hear you.
Fred Wright

FUCK YOU

i won't do what you tell me

Hey
You sent me some stuff a couple of months ago and I've been going to write to you but I never ended up doing it. But now I am because I want to whinge. I've just finished year 10 and I had to go to an interview with teachers from my school to talk about the subjects I picked for next year. So I went and the first thing they said was why did I get so many Cs. I got three Cs and four C+s on my whole report, and it doesn't seem to matter that I got 13 As and A+s. So they lectured me about that for a while then they said why I haven't I put down any maths for next year. I said because I hate maths. They said I had to do it because I was good at it (I got 8% on the final exam). I said no I wasn't doing it and they said I had to to "keep my options open". I told them I know what I'm doing with my life and maths isn't a part of it and it's a waste of a subject. So they rang my Mum at work (she's a maths teacher so they knew they would win if they talked to her) and they came back in and told me they were going to make a SPECIAL DEAL just for me. I have a problem with anxiety and I get stressed really easily, blush really easily, cry really easily etc, and by now I was all tense and felt like I was going to cry. They told me that they'd put me in General Maths (which is the hardest and it's taken with Maths Methods). I was like why is that a special deal and they said because you don't have to do Maths Methods with it. Wow. Special. I wanted to argue with them but I felt like if I tried to talk I would start crying so I just nodded at everything they said because I just wanted to go home. They kept crapping on about nothing and then one of them goes to me "you're upset". Duh. But I still didn't want to say anything so I shook my head but they knew I was and they sat there looking all smug because they had won.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)

Some Bosses Are (Even) Dodgier Than Others...

What to look out for...

- trial periods on the job without payment
- employers not giving you job offers in writing
- employers not paying you on time
- jobs which pay you only by commission
- work experience which is not recognised or approved.

When you are offered a job, always ask: What hours will I be working? What will I be paid?

Things to watch out for:

"Come in for a few days - it will be good experience"

Watch out for offers of unpaid work experience, even if they seem like a good idea.

"I want to give you a trial before offering you the job"

Most job offers are made after an interview. But some employers like to take people on for a trial period to see whether they can do the job. They should tell you how long the trial will last, and pay you a proper wage during the trial period.

Be careful if an employer wants to try you out for a while without paying you. After all, a quick typing test will show how well you type. Why should you spend a day doing typing without being paid?

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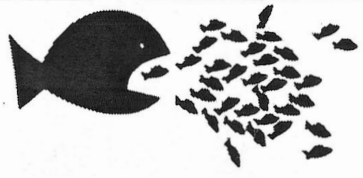

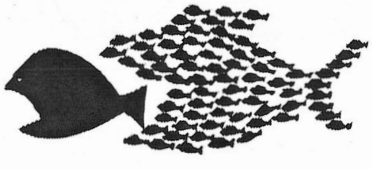

School (continued from last page)

So they gave me maths homework for the holidays and I went home and my Mum had just got there and I yelled at her and she told me to get over it, and to clean my room. Oh well shit happens. My school is full of shit anyway. Take our 'Vision Statement': "the Senior School will deliver a comprehensive VCE for all students through teaching (no shit) and programs that will equip them with values, beliefs knowledge and skills that will foster lifelong learning; enhance their competitiveness (ie make us selfish and greedy) and abilities to become outstanding global citizens of the 21st century".

What a crock of shit. By the way, it only applies to students who tuck their shirts in. If you don't, they couldn't care less about you.

PS A while ago, before I knew about the Salvation Army, I went doorknocking for the Red Shield Appeal with my friend (oops). We made about $300, mostly from people who obviously needed every cent they had, but gave us money anyway. Rich snobs with posh cards hardly ever gave us anything, not even the ones with crucifixes around their necks. Anyway that's not the point. When my friend and I went and handed in the money, they gave us McDonalds vouchers. I don't eat at McDonalds for several reasons, mostly because I'm vegan, so I gave mine to my friend's brother when he drove us home. At the time I thought it was pretty dodgy that a charity would be supporting / being supported by an exploitative company like McDonalds. Doesn't seem strange to me anymore, now that I know what they really stand for.

Bosses (continued from last page)

"Come back again tomorrow ... I still don't know whether you can do the job"

Some employers may lead you on for as long as they can without paying you. Then they might tell you that your work is not good enough. They may do the same thing all over again to someone else.

"I can't pay you this week - I'll make it up to you next week"

This type of employer is likely to come up with another excuse for not paying you next week. Good employers pay wages regularly and on time.

"You've got the job, I don't need to put it in writing"

Most employers will give you a letter outlining your conditions of employment. If you don't get these details in writing, you may find it hard to prove that you were hired to do the job and not just offered the chance for some unpaid work experience.

"Salesperson required, no experience necessary"

If you are being paid only by commission (that is, your pay is a percentage of your sales rather than a weekly wage), you may be a self-employed person rather than an employee. This means that you will not have the protection that employees have under the law. Think very carefully before entering into such an agreement.

You have the right to be paid for the work that you do. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Always make sure that you find out the wage that you should be paid for the work that you do.

Employers have to have a copy of the relevant award displayed in the workplace, and to give you a pay slip every time you are paid.

DOWN WITH THE BOSSES

AND PASS THOSE TULIPS

As a teenager I worked in a florist shop. The owner was overflowing with enthusiasm and with a booming voice to match. Every morning he'd take a look at our stack of orders. Every morning he'd say the same thing: "boys, we've got our work cut out for us today." Then he'd dart from one workstation to another. He'd pull a gladiola out of one arrangement, impulsively stick an extra carnation into another and generally get in the way.

He had a real talent for that, not being a florist himself. To us worker bees, he was a burden we had to bear. By 11 o'clock he'd usually get a phone call from a buddy inviting him to lunch, a game of cards, or maybe an afternoon at the racetrack.

Freed from his distracting presence, we'd churn out bridal bouquets and altar vases by the dozen. At closing time he'd come back. He'd look at a shop floor covered with scraps of ribbon, leaves and stems. And he'd proclaim victory: "well, we got the job done, didn't we?"

We always rolled our eyes at him including himself in the "we" who got the job done. We'd managed to do so much work in the hours he left us in peace. How much more could we have done if he hadn't come in at all?

We asked ourselves the same question that anarchists ask: bosses, who needs them?

Anarchists apply that question to everything from a small shop to the highest level of government. A lot of people argue that the problem with government is that it is in the hands of the wrong people. Put them in charge and it'd work just fine.

Anarchists say that a boss is a boss. Government is an unnecessary burden at best and more likely a noose around its subjects' necks.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the 19th century founder of anarchism, wrote that "to be governed is to be watched over, inspected, spied on, directed, legislated, regimented, closed in, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, assessed, evaluated, censored, commanded; all by creatures that have no right, nor wisdom or virtue...

"To be governed means that at every move, operation, or transaction one is noted, registered, entered in a census, taxed, stamped, priced, assessed, patented, licensed, authorised, recommended, admonished, prevented, reformed, set right, corrected. Government means to be subjected to tribute, trained, ransomed, exploited, monopolized, extorted, pressured, mystified, robbed; all in the name of public utility and the general good.

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Down With the Bosses (continued from last page)

"Then at the first sign of resistance or word of complaint, one is repressed, fined despised, vexed, pursued, hustled, beaten up, garroted, imprisoned, shot, machine gunned, judged, sentenced, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed, and to cap it all, ridiculed, mocked, outraged, and dishonoured.

"That is government, that is its justice and its morality....O human personality! How can it be that you have cowered in such subjection for sixty centuries?"

Proudhon's solution was to get rid of all bosses. He believed that, just as we did fine in that florist shop without the boss, so would all of society.

But how would those little workshops coordinate their efforts without any higher authority?

Just like we did. Often we'd run short of something when the boss was gone. We didn't phone up the racetrack and ask that he be paged so he could call the wholesale supply house. We just called them ourselves. We'd ask our fellow workers there to send over some roses, say, real quick.

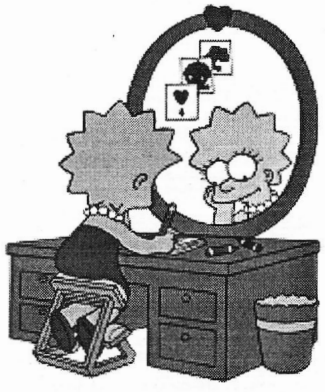
Look at society from the point of view of its opponents. Every few months, the leaders of a few nations come together to work out the next step in the world economy. They plan behind closed doors.

Everyone else is, basically, being enrolled, taxed, stamped, measured, numbered, assessed, and licensed, whether they like it or not.

So we shouldn't be surprised to see more and more people interested in anarchism. For those who feel that the scale of authority is growing so large as to crush the average person, anarchism holds out the promise of a return to a human-scale society.

Anarchism isn't likely to go away soon. More likely it's due for a rebirth. Arguably, it's tailor-made for the growing number of people who don't want to be part of the brave new world of free trade and Golden Arches, which is taking over local cultures all over the world.

PENFRIEND / CONTACT LIST



If you want to get in contact with other people who write to Activate –

Write to us (PO Box 503, Newtown NSW 2042)

Or join via the web - www.apolitical.info/penfriends

First of all I'd like to say thanks for all the cool stuff you sent me. The CD was great and I especially liked reading 'Escape'. I thought it had a great storyline, and a good message and it got me thinking about a few things to. I don't know if it was based on a true story or not, but I noticed it was dedicated to two people who were murdered by Nazis only six years ago. I never even knew that Nazis still existed, and only really associated them with the 1930's and 40's. I guess I don't really know much about Nazis at all except for the very basics. It shocked me to think that Nazi groups like the ones in 'Escape' may still be operating. It made me feel a bit guilty too, because like Paul, when I was at high school I used to hang around some people who thought Nazis were cool. They claimed to be Nazis themselves (though not to the extent of Mueller and Ascher in your story) and even started a little group called N.S.P., which stood for Nazi skater punks. They convinced me to join their group, not because I thought Nazis were cool. At that stage I didn't know a thing about Nazis. I just thought their skateboards looked cool with Nazi symbols scrawled all over them. There were only 5 of us and we never did anything violent or even illegal. We just skated around like any other group of 5 guys with skateboards. N.S.P. was really just a name and nothing more. And it only lasted a couple of months. I guess that's why I liked your story. I could relate to Paul and the changes he went through.

After reading 'Escape' [www.apolitical.info/escape] I wanted to go to my local library to learn more about what Nazis have done and might still be doing, but when I went to where it used to be, it had been knocked down to make way for an extension to the shopping centre across the road. I don't know if it moved somewhere else, or if it's going to be rebuilt. I just hope some bright spark hasn't decided that a bigger shopping centre is more important than people's education.

Also thank you for letting me know about the anarchist bookshops in Sydney. I do intend to visit them soon.

"Without censorship, things can get terribly confused in the public mind."

General William Westmoreland.

no governments

= no wars

"Fighting crime by building more jails is like fighting cancer by building more cemeteries."

Paul Kelly.

We Are Being Robbed

Most people will spend most of their lives working for someone else.

Obviously your work will make money for your boss. And obviously you'll get some money back as wages. The fair thing would be if you got paid what your work was worth. If you made $100 for the business, your work is worth $100. So that would be a fair amount to pay you.

But if that happened, then the boss wouldn't make any money out of you.

So what they'll do is pay you less than the fair amount - less than what your work is worth, or in other words less than what you make for the business.

One of my friends who worked in a call centre was told that every time someone called in sick, that cost the business $1000. That means that her work was worth about $5000 a week. Of course she wasn't getting $5000 a week, or anything like it.

Say you get $600 a week before tax. Your work is probably worth at least $6000 profit for your employer, less your $600 wage.

In other words, they don't pay you $600. You pay them $5400, for the privilege of working for them! To put it another way - you probably earn your pay by lunchtime on Monday. The rest of the week you're being ripped off.

This is a great system if you're a boss. You get to make money out of other people's work. You also get to be important and tell people what to do. It's not so good if you're a worker like most people. You get to spend most of your life working, you get to be told what to do for the whole time, and you get to be robbed every time you go to work.

Can't Be Fucked Doing Your Homework By Yourself?

If you're doing a project, we might be able to help you with it. If it's about anything we talk about in Activate, write to us. Some examples: the government, drugs, the police, racism, or bullying.

PO Box 503, Newtown NSW 2042
or email activate@apolitical.info

INSTEAD OF THE POLICE

A lot of people don't like the police. But most people don't have any idea of what to replace them with. A lot of people want to make the police less racist, less corrupt etc. But we don't think the police force will ever treat everyone properly. Being able to arrest people, having power over people, will always attract some bad people. People who like the idea of having power. People who like being bullies. Even when people join the police for good reasons, having power over other people can change you pretty quickly. As the saying goes: 'power corrupts'.

The main problem with the police isn't the people in it though. The main problem is who they take orders from. Most of the power in society is held by very rich people and politicians. The government, the courts, and the police, are all working for the benefit of these few people.

It wouldn't matter if every cop was a great person. They'd be enforcing the same laws. Those laws are made by the rich and powerful, for the rich and powerful. If you've ever been a victim of crime, you often find that the police can't help you. The system will lock people up and turn them into worse criminals rather than genuinely reforming them, because the law doesn't give a shit about the communities they hurt. Forcing people into school and then into shit jobs is perfectly legal - because that's how rich people stay rich. And if you put forward an opinion that's against the system, the police will try and censor you (the police stopped us handing out Activates in Sydney).

People often say that if it wasn't for the police everyone would go wild and attack each other. This isn't true. For a start, the police don't seem to do anything about most violence anyway. Look at all the bullying, rape, robbery etc that happens. If the police are supposed to stop people from attacking each other they're doing a pretty shit job. And there's probably not much they could do. Violent people are that way because they're fucked up by the system. As long as people are ordered around, told they're worthless, ignored and kept in poverty, then they'll strike out. Almost never at their real enemy. There'll be violence as long as this system exists. This doesn't make it OK, but it does make it inevitable. And the police are there to protect the system, not to change it. As they say, they're 'only there to enforce the law'.

Instead of the police, communities themselves could stop anti-social acts. If your house got robbed, the police might investigate for about five minutes. But if it was up to your family, friends, workmates and community they'd make more of an effort to find out who did it and stop it. And they'd do a better job, because they'd know what was happening in their area.

Of course the system would hate this to happen. If people did stuff like this, and did a better job than the police, they'd realise that they don't need the government. Even though it'd make life much safer, the police would do all they could to stop it. Because they're not here to stop crime. They're here to protect the system. And that's why we're against them.

THE KIDS ARE OUR FUTURE

How many of us have pain inside of us that we rarely speak about? Probably a lot of us. It's not the sort of thing you bring up in conversation generally, although sometimes it does come up and you can get a bit of torment off your chest.

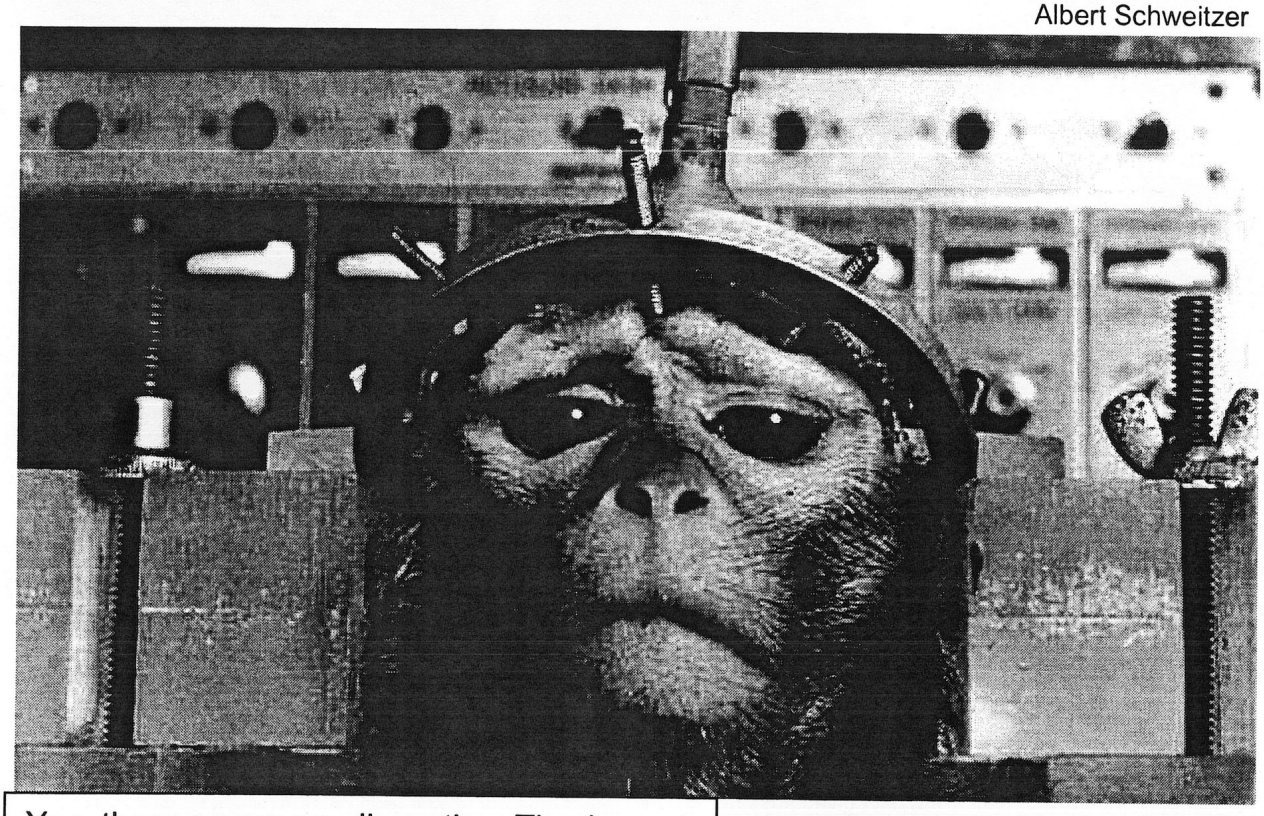
My father beat me round. He would lose his temper and clobber me. Around the head and face sometimes, at other times, when I was younger, he'd belt me. At first it was over the backside but he'd lose control of himself and his anger and then he'd belt me and my brother across the legs and up the back with the leather belt he wore daily. Once he was so irate that he pinned me to the floor with his legs over my arms and slapped me continuously across the face for over a minute. I was still in high school at the time. About fourteen I think. It fucked me up real bad. Mum was screaming at him to stop but he wouldn't. Or couldn't. Afterwards I ran to my room, hyperventilating, in shock from the beating physically but more so from the emotional terror I had just experienced. My father scared me. He always scared me. He never showed love, compassion or understanding. Why? I asked my self over and over again. Was it my fault? Was I causing all this tension and distress in the family? I began to think that it was all my fault. That I'd brought all this violence onto myself.

The way dad spoke to me. He saw me as a burden on his shoulders. There I was eating his food, drinking his drinks, living under the roof that he had to pay for. He paid for almost everything and he belived that I just took it for granted. He was wrong about that. Strangely, I still loved him very much but this is the classic domestic violence scenario. The one who hurts you most is the one you are closest to. So many of us are trapped inside of this situation and although we are looking for an exit we often don't find it because to do so means having real friends to help you get out - and in my situation being a kid didn't help.

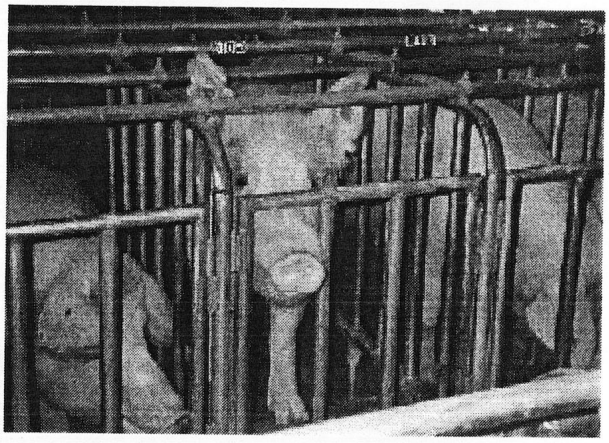
Kids are just extensions of their parents it seems, with few rights and little freedom. If kids complain about their treatment then they're ungrateful for what they've been given. Adults at times seem to lack an understanding of kids and stupidly respect the right of parents to treat their kids willy-nilly; children are people too, in their own right. They have their own lives, albeit naive or ignorant with plenty to learn. But it seems that adults respect the right of parents to treat their kids how they please simply because they are the kids' parents. While parents' must be given a wide ranging scope to bring up their kids in the manner they deem fitting, the area of child upbringing needs to be brought into the public arena for scrutiny. If more parents saw how other kids were treated they may learn something - what to do or what not to do. More importantly, if kids were brought up on a communal basis (nothing hippy in this idea) then parents would not only receive a well deserved break from child-rearing through community child minding and labour sharing but would also gain valuable insights into how kids react to different situations. This would give parents' the opportunity of an objective viewpoint which they rarely have the time to arrange for themselves and give the kids the chance to reach out and meet some new (trusted) people.

"Anyone who has accustomed himself to regard the life of any living creature as worthless is in danger of arriving also at the idea of worthless human lives."

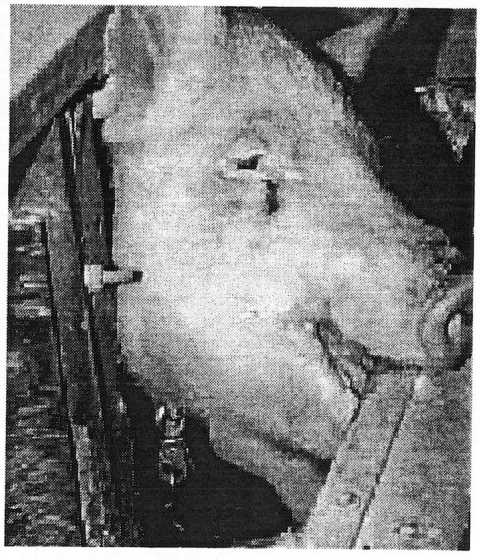
Albert Schweitzer



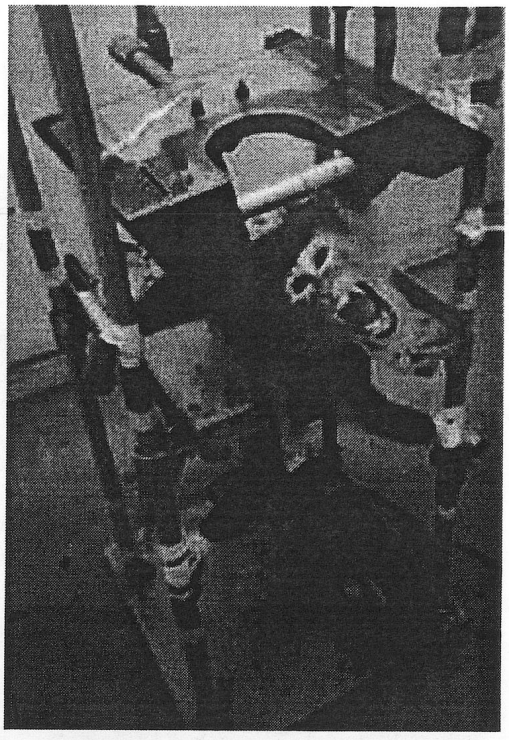
Yes, these pages are disgusting. They're meant to show that the way our society 'uses' animals is disgusting and wrong – whether for fur, medical experiments or food. There's no need for people to eat meat – in fact generally you'd be healthier without it. It's far from natural – nothing is less natural than a factory farm. And we've got no right to do it.



Pigs can live their whole lives without seeing the sun, in cages that are too small to even turn around in.



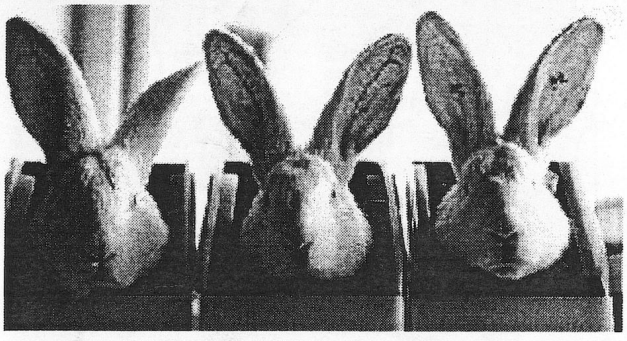
This dog's leg was shattered with a hammer. The aim was 'to induce a state of psychological stress' and so no anaesthetic was given and the wound was left untreated.

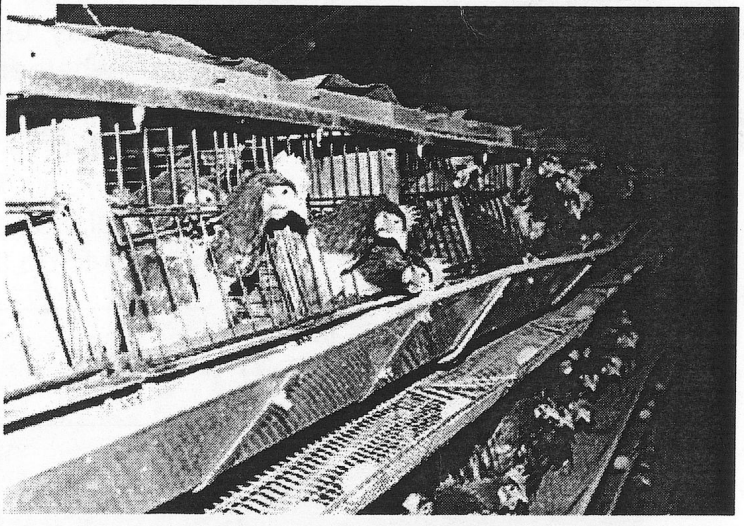


More information on giving up eating meat:
http://www.goveg.com/feat/faq.htm
http://www.peta2.com/stuff/s-recipe.html

This monkey's skull was sawed open and electrodes attached to his brain as part of an experiment. He wasn't given any drinking water until he could pass various tests. A scientist was recorded saying that "we did all kinds of nonsense, simply so we can do something' – and that the experiment wasn't documented properly because of a computer failure.

A hen with its wings outstretched is about twice as wide as a typical cage.





"It's the same thing with an animal who pisses you off, except it *is* in the stick pit, you *are* going to kill it. Only you don't just kill it, you go in hard, push hard, blow the windpipe, make it drown in its own blood. Split its nose. A live hog would be running around the pit. It would just be looking up at me and I'd be sticking, and I would just take my knife and -- eerk -- cut its eye out while it was just sitting there … One time I took my knife -- it's sharp enough -- and I sliced off the end of a hog's nose, just like a piece of bologna … I took a handful of salt brine and ground it into his nose … I stuck the salt right up the hog's ass … It's not anything anyone should be proud of … It was my way of taking out frustration."

Worker in a slaughterhouse.

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